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Claim Amendments

Please amend claims 1, 9, and 16 as follows:

Please add new claims 21-27 as follows

Please cancel claims 4, 6, 7, 12, 14, 15, and 20.

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Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) A method of ~~re-exposing~~ rendering visible alignment marks on a substrate through an overlying transparent dielectric layer on an upper surface of said substrate during semiconductor device fabrication, comprising the steps of:

providing a substrate with alignment marks;

forming a transparent dielectric layer covering said alignment marks;

forming at least one opaque layer on said transparent dielectric layer overlaying the alignment marks; and

impinging a focused ion beam against the at least one opaque layer to ~~obliterate~~ remove the at least one opaque layer overlaying the transparent dielectric layer to leave at least a portion of said transparent dielectric layer covering said alignment marks, thereby rendering the alignment marks visible.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said focused ion beam has a noble gas ion source.

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3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said focused ion beam has a current density of about 400-800 pA.

4. (canceled)

5. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein said noble gas ion source comprises argon.

6. (canceled)

7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) The method of claim [[7]] 1 wherein said focused ion beam has a current density of about 400-800 pA.

9. (currently amended) A method of ~~fully re-exposing~~ rendering visible alignment marks on a substrate through an upper surface of said substrate during semiconductor device fabrication, said substrate upper surface comprising at least one transparent dielectric layer ~~overlaying~~ covering the alignment marks and at least one opaque layer ~~overlaying on~~ the at least one transparent dielectric layer, comprising the steps of:

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providing a focused ion beam;

cutting an exposure opening in the at least one opaque layer to render visible the alignment marks by impinging said focused ion beam against the at least one opaque layer; ~~and~~

wherein said alignment marks are rendered visible by removing the opaque layer and leaving the at least one transparent dielectric layer substantially intact over the alignment marks.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said focused ion beam has a noble gas ion source.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein said focused ion beam has a current density of about 400-800 pA.

12. (canceled)

13. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said noble gas ion source comprises argon.

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14. (canceled)

15. (canceled)

16. (currently amended) A method of ~~fully re-exposing~~ rendering visible alignment marks on a substrate through an upper surface of said substrate during semiconductor device fabrication, said substrate upper surface comprising a transparent dielectric layer ~~overlying~~ covering the alignment marks and at least one opaque layer ~~overlying on~~ the transparent dielectric layer, comprising the steps of:

providing a focused ion beam;

cutting an exposure opening in the at least one opaque layer by removing the opaque layer down to the transparent dielectric layer to render visible the alignment marks through said transparent dielectric layer by impinging said focused ion beam against the at least one opaque layer;

leaving at least a portion of the transparent dielectric layer intact over the alignment marks; ~~and~~

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wherein removal of the opaque layer is determined by viewing the ~~alignment marks~~ said opaque layer removal in real-time through the exposure opening including viewing ~~and~~ the transparent dielectric layer.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein said focused ion beam has a noble gas ion source.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein said focused ion beam has a current density of about 200-800 pA.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein said noble gas ion source comprises argon.

20. (canceled)

21. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein said transparent dielectric layer is left substantially intact covering the alignment marks following removal of the opaque layer.

22. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein said transparent dielectric layer and said opaque layer comprise layers formed over the alignment marks during metal-insulator-metal (MIM)

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device fabrication.

23. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein said opaque layer removal is determined by viewing said opaque layer removal in real time including viewing said transparent dielectric layer.

24. (new) The method of claim 9, wherein said transparent dielectric layer and said opaque layer comprise layers formed over the alignment marks during metal-insulator-metal (MIM) device fabrication.

25. (new) The method of claim 9, wherein said opaque layer removal is determined by viewing said opaque layer removal in real time including viewing said transparent dielectric layer.

26. (new) The method of claim 16, wherein said transparent dielectric layer and said opaque layer comprise layers formed over the alignment marks during metal-insulator-metal (MIM) device fabrication.

27. (new) The method of claim 16, wherein said transparent dielectric layer is left substantially intact covering the alignment marks following removal of the opaque layer.